

Board of Education Agenda Item

Item: _____ D. _____

Date: May 24, 2006

Topic: Final Review of a Recommendation of the Advisory Board on Teacher Education and Licensure to Grant Continuing Program Approval with Stipulations to the Teacher Education Program at Saint Paul's College

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Origin:

_____ Topic presented for information only (no board action required)

X Board review required by
_____ State or federal law or regulation
X Board of Education regulation
_____ Other: _____

X Action requested at this meeting: The board will receive ABTEL's recommendation for final review and program approval

_____ Action requested at future meeting: _____ (date)

Previous Review/Action:

_____ No previous board review/action

X Previous review/action
date April 26, 2006
action Received ABTEL's recommendation for first review

Background Information:

The Regulations Governing Approved Programs for Virginia Institutions of Higher Education require colleges and universities that offer programs for the preparation of professional educators to obtain continuing program approval from the Board of Education. In Virginia, the review and approval of programs is viewed as the shared responsibility of institutions of higher education, school divisions, and the Department of Education. Final approval rests with the Board of Education.

The regulations define the standards that must be met and the review options available for the accreditation of teacher education programs. The regulations provide three options for accreditation: 1) a state review process for which the teacher education program must meet the standards established by Board of Education regulations; 2) the National Council for the Accreditation of Teacher Education (NCATE) process for which the teacher education program must meet the board's teaching area

requirements and the NCATE standards; or 3) the Teacher Education Accreditation Council (TEAC) process for which the teacher education program must meet the board's teaching area requirements and the TEAC standards. In all three options, the institution hosts an on-site visit by a team of trained reviewers who develop a report of findings that is submitted to the Department of Education for review by the Advisory Board on Teacher Education and Licensure (ABTEL). After a review of the report of findings, the ABTEL makes a recommendation to the Board of Education for final action.

Summary of Major Elements:

During spring 2005, Saint Paul's College was reviewed using a process approved by the Board of Education and based on 20 standards in the following four categories:

- I. Program Design;
- II. Faculty;
- III. Candidates; and
- IV. Program Operation/Accountability.

Saint Paul's College was founded in 1888 and is one of Virginia's historically Black colleges. A private, co-educational college associated with the Episcopal Church, the school was incorporated originally as the Saint Paul Normal and Industrial School. A department of teacher training was started in 1922 and was recognized by the Board of Education in 1926. The college prepares students for careers and graduate studies in the humanities, social sciences, education, business, mathematics, and natural sciences. Saint Paul's purpose "is to provide an academic environment that promotes the vision of its founder to educate all students, especially the underserved, with educational, cultural, spiritual, and life-long learning experiences that will enable them to lead in a technological and global society."

The team recommendation for the teacher preparation program at Saint Paul's College is continuing approval with stipulations. A recommendation of approval with stipulations is made when the institution's teacher education program does not meet all standards or has met the standards with weaknesses. The review team made the recommendation of approval with stipulations based on the finding that 5 of 18 applicable standards were not met. Specific indicators of the five standards not met include the following:

1. There is little evidence that candidates have acquired the knowledge and skills needed to succeed on the Praxis I assessment in reading, writing, and mathematics;
2. Evidence regarding Praxis II was not presented because the data have not been systematically collected;
3. Additional information is needed to identify all competencies on the program matrices;
4. Professional studies coursework exceeds the 24-hour limit for elementary and special education and exceeds the 18-hour limit for other endorsement areas; and
5. The teaching load for full-time faculty of 15 hours per semester does not accommodate and support faculty involvement in teaching, scholarship, and service. Additionally, a recruitment and retention policy that includes an explicit plan with adequate resources to hire and retain a qualified and diverse faculty was not evident.

At the November 21, 2005, ABTEL meeting, the Teacher Education Committee of ABTEL requested to review the full report of the on-site visit as well as meet with officials regarding the recommendation of the state team. At its February 6, 2006, and March 20, 2006, meetings, the Teacher Education Committee of ABTEL discussed the findings of the on-site review team. Officials of Saint Paul's College presented information on improvements made in the teacher preparation program since the March 2005 review and provided the Department of Education with responses to the standards that were not met when the visit was conducted. Significant progress at the college included the following:

- For spring semester 2006, 44 traditional students are pursuing teaching endorsements in the Department of Education at Saint Paul's College;
- Saint Paul's College serves a growing population of nontraditional candidates (career switchers) in the underserved region of Southside Virginia. During the 2003-2006 academic years, this population has averaged more than 50 candidates per year seeking licensure preparation.
- Two new Praxis I and Praxis II preparation courses have been implemented. These courses feature individualized instruction by faculty in specific discipline areas, tutoring, and access to Plato (a computer-based Praxis preparation system);
- Two faculty members with doctoral degrees have been hired;
- A reform of the general education curriculum was implemented during fall 2004 and continues to provide a foundation for students pursuing teacher education;
- The Department of Education at Saint Paul's College has developed a system to monitor candidate progress and collect data on candidate achievement;
- Professional studies coursework has been adjusted to meet the cap established by the Board of Education; and
- Faculty loads have been adjusted within the college's Department of Education.

At its March 20, 2006 meeting, ABTEL approved a motion to continue program approval with stipulations at Saint Paul's College. The advisory board's action was based on the significant progress the college has made toward fulfilling the requirements of the unmet standards since the review team visit. Additionally, the president of the college, the provost, and the director of teacher education met with the advisory board and assured ABTEL of their commitment to the continued enhancement of the teacher preparation program at Saint Paul's College through the implementation of specific strategies and documentation of progress toward continued improvement.

The approval with stipulations is contingent upon continued progress at the college in the areas of: (1) alignment with the teacher education standards; (2) data development and annual maintenance of information on candidate progress; (3) service to the community through programs for nontraditional students; and (4) annual reports to the Department of Education on progress made based on the contingencies. During first review of the ABTEL recommendation on April 26, 2006, members of the Board of Education received a personal statement from Dr. John K. Waddell, president of Saint Paul's College, assuring timely implementation of the four contingencies.

Superintendent's Recommendation:

The Acting Superintendent of Public Instruction recommends that the Board of Education approve ABTEL's recommendation to grant continuing program approval with stipulations to the teacher education program at Saint Paul's College, contingent upon continued progress at the college in the areas of: (1) alignment with the teacher education standards; (2) data development and annual maintenance of information on candidate progress; (3) service to the community through programs for nontraditional students; and (4) annual reports to the Department of Education on progress made based on the contingencies.

Impact on Resources:

Expenses incurred during on-site review of teacher education programs are funded by the hosting institution.

Timetable for Further Review/Action:

Teacher preparation programs reviewed under the state approval process are conducted on a seven-year cycle. Programs that meet standards for full approval will be reviewed again on the established cycle.